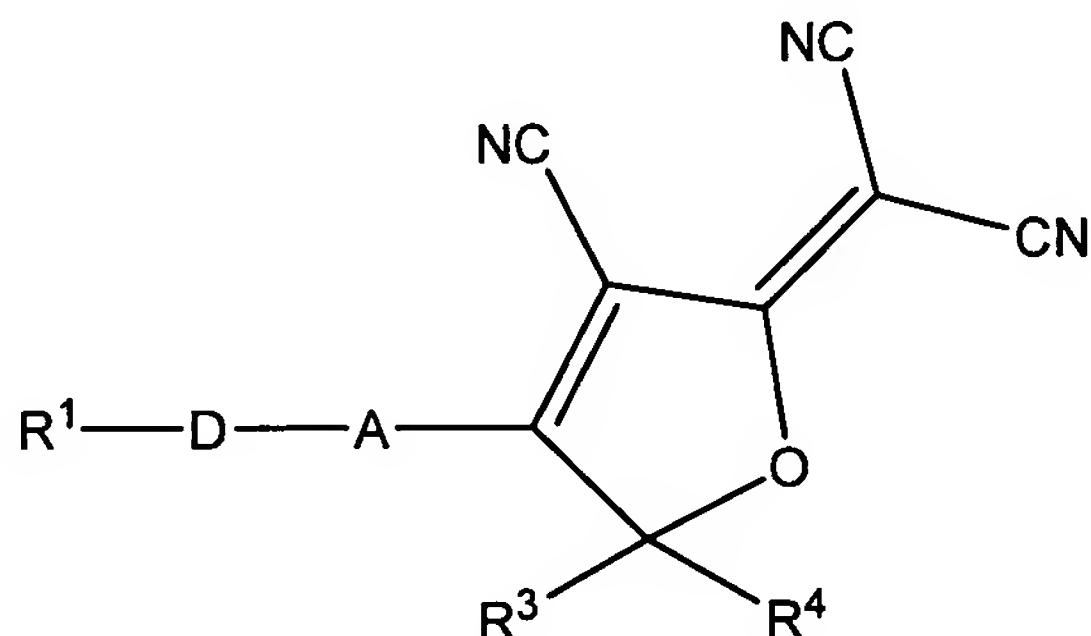


## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete listing of the claims.

- 1-2. (Cancelled)
3. (Currently amended) A composition comprising a fluorophore compound, the fluorophore compound having the chemical structure:



wherein:

D is a donor group comprising an oxygen atom, wherein said oxygen atom is a donor atom conjugated with A;

A is a moiety having at least one multiple bond conjugated with the donor group and the 2-dicyanomethylen-3-cyano-2,5-dihydrofuran group;

R<sup>1</sup> is an alkyl group, alkoxy alkyl group, aromatic group, substituted aromatic group, or hydrogen;

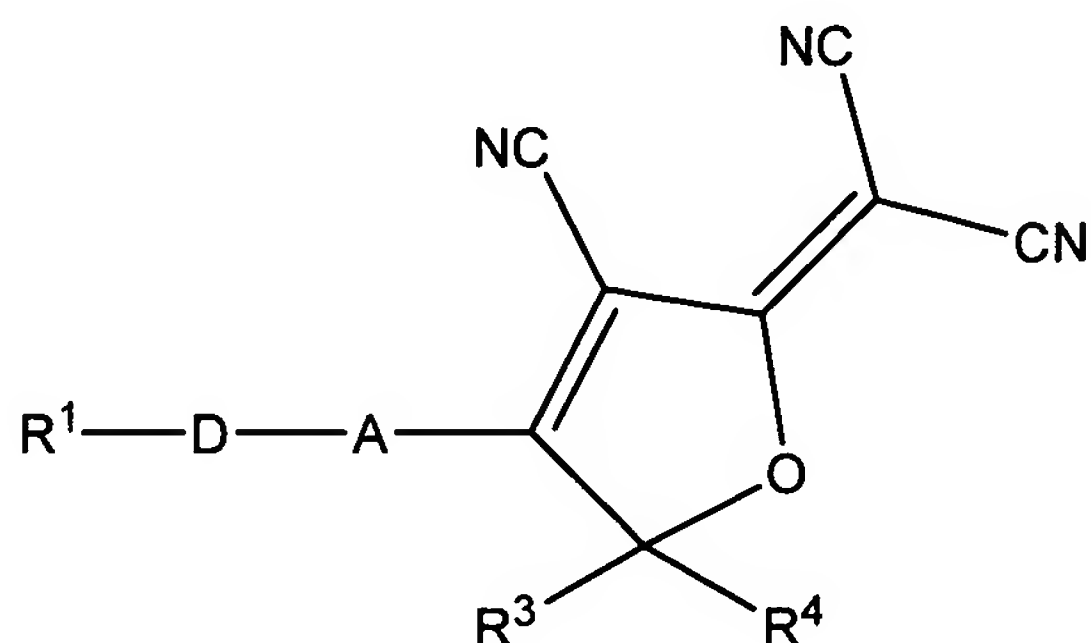
R<sup>3</sup> is an alkyl group, fluoroalkyl group, aromatic group, or substituted aromatic group;

R<sup>4</sup> is an alkyl group, fluoroalkyl group, aromatic group, or substituted aromatic group;

and

the fluorophore compound is not DCDHF-6 (2-[3-Cyano-4-(4-dihexylamino-phenyl)-5,5-dimethyl-5H-furan-2-ylidene]-malononitrile; where A is a benzene ring, D is dihexylamine, R<sup>3</sup> is methyl, and R<sup>4</sup> is methyl).

4. (Currently amended) A composition comprising a fluorophore compound, the fluorophore compound having the chemical structure:



wherein:

D is a donor group comprising a sulfur atom, wherein said sulfur atom is a donor atom conjugated with A;

A is a moiety having at least one multiple bond conjugated with the donor group and the 2-dicyanomethylen-3-cyano-2,5-dihydrofuran group;

R<sup>1</sup> is an alkyl group, alkoxy alkyl group, aromatic group, substituted aromatic group, or hydrogen;

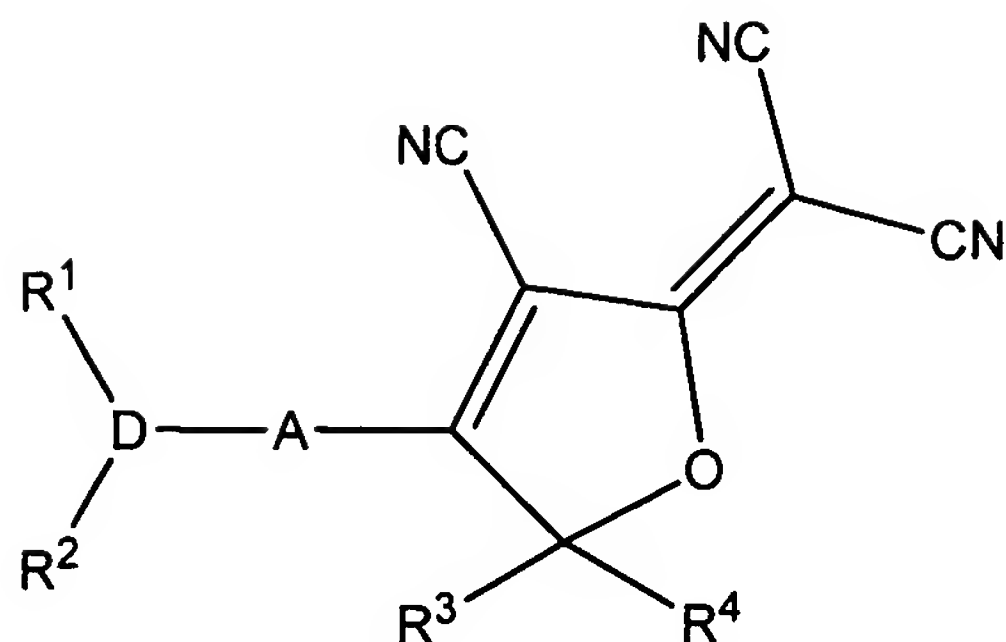
R<sup>3</sup> is an alkyl group, fluoroalkyl group, aromatic group, or substituted aromatic group;

R<sup>4</sup> is an alkyl group, fluoroalkyl group, aromatic group, or substituted aromatic group;

and

the fluorophore compound is not DCDHF-6 (2-[3-Cyano-4-(4-dihexylamino-phenyl)-5,5-dimethyl-5H-furan-2-ylidene]-malononitrile; where A is a benzene ring, D is dihexylamine, R<sup>3</sup> is methyl, and R<sup>4</sup> is methyl).

5. (Currently amended) A composition comprising a fluorophore compound, the fluorophore compound having the chemical structure:



wherein:

D is a donor group comprising a phosphorous atom, wherein said phosphorous atom is a donor atom conjugated with A;

A is a moiety having at least one multiple bond conjugated with the donor group and the 2-dicyanomethylen-3-cyano-2,5-dihydrofuran group;

R<sup>1</sup> is an alkyl group, alkoxy alkyl group, aromatic group, substituted aromatic group, or hydrogen;

R<sup>2</sup> is an alkyl group, alkoxy alkyl group, aromatic group, substituted aromatic group, or hydrogen;

R<sup>3</sup> is an alkyl group, fluoroalkyl group, aromatic group, or substituted aromatic group;

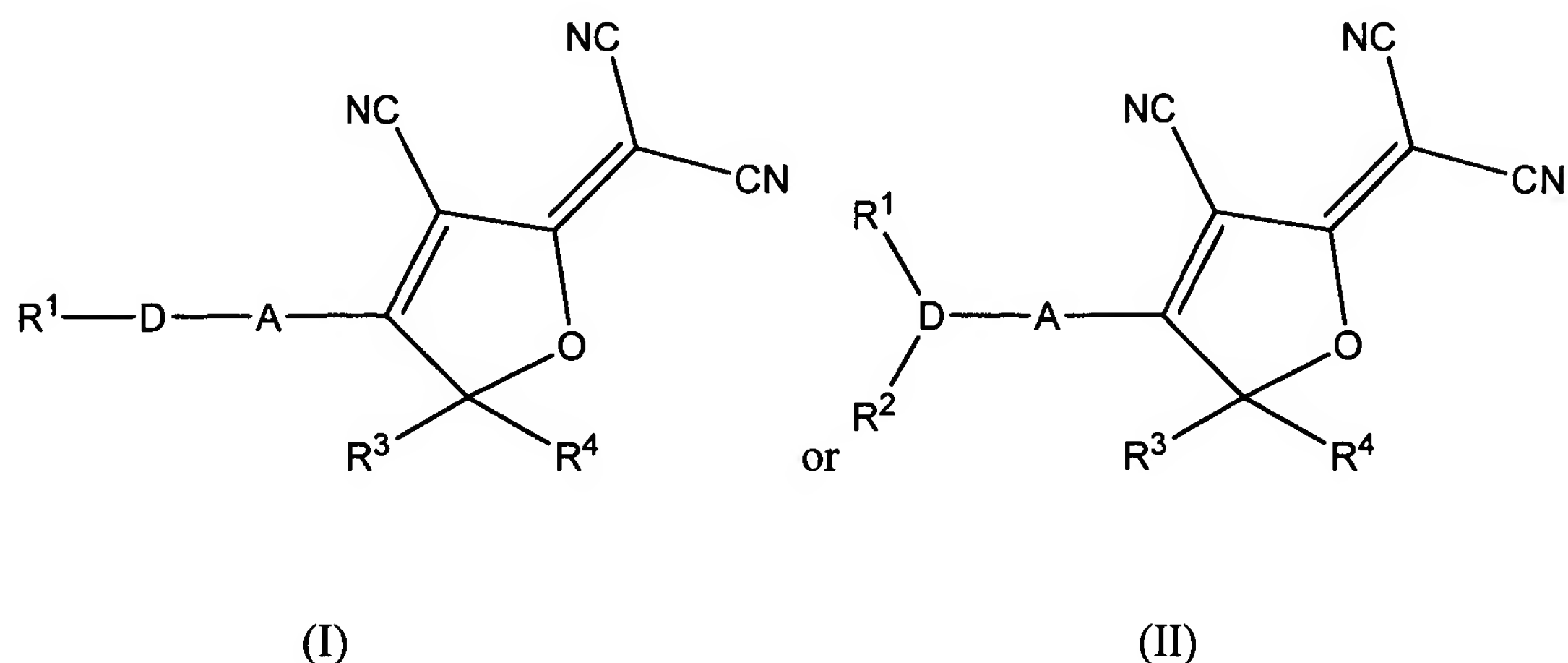
R<sup>4</sup> is an alkyl group, fluoroalkyl group, aromatic group, or substituted aromatic group;

and

the fluorophore compound is not DCDHF-6 (2-[3-Cyano-4-(4-dihexylamino-phenyl)-5,5-dimethyl-5H-furan-2-ylidene]-malononitrile; where A is a benzene ring, D is dihexylamine, R<sup>3</sup> is methyl, and R<sup>4</sup> is methyl).

6-7. (Cancelled).

8. (Currently amended) A composition comprising a fluorophore compound, the fluorophore compound having the chemical structure:



wherein:

D is a donor group comprising a donor atom having at least one free electron pair

conjugated with A, wherein the donor atom is an oxygen atom or a sulfur atom for structure (I), or, a nitrogen atom or a phosphorous atom for structure (II);

A is thiophene, furan, pyrrole, imidazole, pyrazole, oxazole, thiazole, diazole, oxadiazole, or thiadiazole;

R<sup>1</sup> is an alkyl group, alkoxy alkyl group, aromatic group, substituted aromatic group, or hydrogen;

R<sup>2</sup> is an alkyl group, alkoxy alkyl group, aromatic group, substituted aromatic group, or hydrogen;

R<sup>3</sup> is an alkyl group, fluoroalkyl group, aromatic group, or substituted aromatic group;

R<sup>4</sup> is an alkyl group, fluoroalkyl group, aromatic group, or substituted aromatic group;

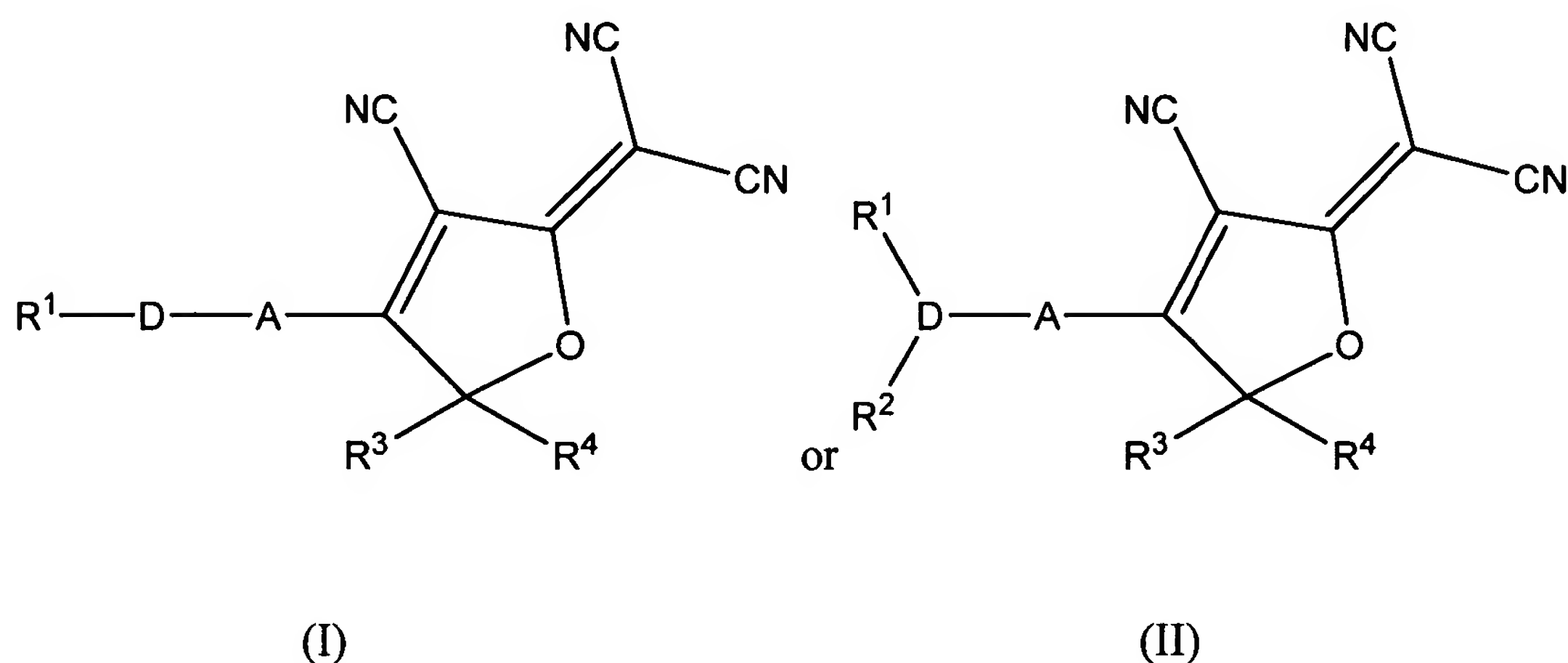
and

wherein when the donor atom is a nitrogen atom, R<sup>1</sup>-R<sup>4</sup> are not all alkyl groups or fluoroalkyl groups, the fluorophore compound is not DCDHF-6 (2-[3-Cyano-4-(4-

dihexylamino-phenyl)-5,5-dimethyl-5H-furan-2-ylidene]-malononitrile; where A is a benzene ring, D is dihexylamine, R<sup>3</sup> is methyl, and R<sup>4</sup> is methyl).

9. (Cancelled).

10. (Previously amended) A composition comprising a fluorophore compound, the fluorophore compound having the chemical structure:



wherein:

D is a donor group comprising a donor atom having at least one free electron pair

conjugated with A, wherein the donor atom is an oxygen atom or a sulfur atom for structure (I), or, a nitrogen atom or a phosphorous atom for structure (II);

A comprises a tolane group;

R<sup>1</sup> is an alkyl group, alkoxy alkyl group, aromatic group, substituted aromatic group, or hydrogen;

R<sup>2</sup> is an alkyl group, alkoxy alkyl group, aromatic group, substituted aromatic group, or hydrogen;

R<sup>3</sup> is an alkyl group, fluoroalkyl group, aromatic group, or substituted aromatic group;

and

11. (Cancelled).

Chemical structures (I) and (II) are shown. Structure (I) is a furan ring substituted with a cyano group (NC) at the 2-position, a cyano group (CN) at the 3-position, and a substituent group (R<sup>1</sup>-D-A) at the 4-position. The furan ring is also substituted with R<sup>3</sup> and R<sup>4</sup> at the 5-position. Structure (II) is a furan ring substituted with a cyano group (NC) at the 2-position, a cyano group (CN) at the 3-position, and a substituent group (R<sup>1</sup>-D-A) at the 4-position. The furan ring is also substituted with R<sup>3</sup> and R<sup>4</sup> at the 5-position. The substituent group (R<sup>1</sup>-D-A) is defined as R<sup>1</sup>-D-A, where D is a divalent group and A is a divalent group.

D is a donor group comprising a donor atom having at least one free electron pair

A is a moiety having at least one multiple bond conjugated with the donor group and the 2-dicyanomethylen-3-cyano-2,5-dihydrofuran group;



D is a donor group comprising a donor atom having at least one free electron pair conjugated with A, wherein the donor atom is an oxygen atom or a sulfur atom for structure (I), or, a nitrogen atom or a phosphorous atom for structure (II);

A is a moiety having at least one multiple bond conjugated with the donor group and the 2-dicyanomethylen-3-cyano-2,5-dihydrofuran group;

R<sup>1</sup> is an alkyl group, alkoxy alkyl group, aromatic group, substituted aromatic group, or hydrogen;

R<sup>2</sup> is an alkyl group, alkoxy alkyl group, aromatic group, substituted aromatic group, or hydrogen;

R<sup>3</sup> is an alkyl group, aromatic group, substituted aromatic group, trifluoromethyl or pentafluoroethyl;

R<sup>4</sup> is an alkyl group, aromatic group, substituted aromatic group, trifluoromethyl or pentafluoroethyl; and

wherein when the donor atom is a nitrogen atom, R<sup>1</sup>-R<sup>4</sup> are not all alkyl groups or fluoroalkyl groups, the fluorophore compound is not DCDHF-6 (2-[3-Cyano-4-(4-dihexylamino-phenyl)-5,5-dimethyl-5H-furan-2-ylidene]-malononitrile; where A is a benzene ring, D is dihexylamine, R<sup>3</sup> is methyl, and R<sup>4</sup> is methyl).

14-40. (Cancelled)